

IRRIGATED LANDS REGULATORY PROGRAM UPDATE

November 2017

This month's Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program update provides a summary of significant activities of State Water Resources Control Board from October 15, 2017 to November 16, 2017 and the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board from September 15, 2017 to November 15, 2017. Next month's report will present activities of the North Coast, San Francisco Bay, Central Coast, Los Angeles, Colorado River Basin, Santa Ana, and San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board's Program and cover the time period from October 15, 2017 to December 15, 2017.

STATE WATER BOARD

On October 18, 2017, Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program and Nonpoint Source Program staff participated in a Natural Resources Conservation Service State Technical Advisory Committee meeting to discuss allocation of 2018 Farm Bill funds and the anticipated future impact to Farm Bill funding based on anticipated budget cuts. \$1.5 million was maintained in the 2018 Farm Bill for National Water Quality Initiative Projects in California.

On October 19, 2017, Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program staff (staff) participated in a California Association of Pest Control Advisers and Certified Crop Advisers Board of Directors meeting to discuss budget issues and the addition of the State Agronomist to the Board of Directors.

On October 24, 2017, staff participated as a member of the Environmental Farming Act Science Advisory Panel, hosted by California Department of Food and Agriculture. At this meeting, staff presented summaries of public comments received and the programmatic framework for the Healthy Soils Program. Public comments focused on the incentives program, funding, scoring criteria, eligibility, and the roles of non-profit organizations.

On October 27, 2017, staff participated in California Bio-Resources Alliance steering committee meeting to continue planning the annual symposium scheduled for November 1 – 2, 2017, in Sacramento.

On November 1-2, 2017, staff participated in the 2017 California Bio-Resources Alliance Annual Symposium. The theme of the symposium was "Building California's Sustainable Bioresource Economy". Topics presented included: A case study on the process to profitably construct and operate a new organics facility in California; Short-Lived Climate Pollutants; Healthy Soils; Scaling the findings of the Marin Carbon Project; Re-visioning the agricultural paradigm; Bioproducts portfolio approach; Organics infrastructure development in California.

On November 3, 2017, staff participated in a conference call with Catherine Freeman, Chief Consultant to the Assembly Water, Parks, and Wildlife Committee. The conference call was brief Ms. Freeman on the Irrigated Lands Program to prepare her for a meeting she is having with Imperial County farmers. Also participating on the call was staff from Division of Water Quality, Office of Legislative Affairs, Fee Unit, and Region 7 Executive Officer.

On November 9, 2017, staff participated in a California Agricultural Partnership Forum meeting to discuss a presentation staff will be presenting at the California Resource Conservation District annual conference scheduled for November 15-17, 2017. The theme of the conference is "Dynamic Partnerships, Relevant Results". The California Agricultural Partnership Forum objective is to support ongoing development of a framework to promote agricultural related water quality improvement demonstration projects and regulatory recognition.

On November 16, 2017, staff participated in a conference call with the EPA Office of Inspector General (OIG) to discuss their assignment to conduct preliminary research regarding the land application of sewage sludge (biosolids). The OIG assignment is to determine if the EPA implements controls over the land application of sewage sludge that protect human health and the environment. The EPA was looking to get California's perspective on the biosolids program.

CENTRAL VALLEY REGION

Central Valley Regional Water Board staff (staff) holds quarterly stakeholder meetings to provide an open forum for communication between staff, agricultural coalitions, environmental justice groups, and other interested parties in the Central Valley Region. The October 25, 2017 stakeholder meeting was held at the Stanislaus County Farm Bureau with a focused discussion on the updated State Water Board Order regarding the East San Joaquin petition. State Water Board fee staff also discussed upcoming stakeholder efforts associated with potential future fee modifications.

Staff continue to concentrate compliance, outreach, and enforcement efforts on the following areas: agricultural parcel inspections; Water Code section 13260 Directives; Notices of Violation for failure to respond to a Water Code section 13260 Directive and failure to comply with Orders; and Administrative Civil Liability Complaints. From mid-September to early November, staff conducted 264 parcel inspections to determine the possible need for irrigated lands enrollment, 10 on-farm inspections to assess General Order compliances and issued over 460 outreach letters and over 200 Notices of Violation. The Central Valley Regional Water Board also reached a settlement agreement for a civil liability complaint with a grower for failing to obtain regulatory coverage.

Additional information can be found on the [Regional Board website](#).